Specific Programme to Check Dropouts

*248. SHRI C. PERUMAL: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that there has been an increase in the number of dropouts from elementary school during the current year;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there is any specific programme planned by Government to reduce the number during the current Plan period; and

(d) if so, the details of the programme and the ratio of Central allocation for this programme, State-wise?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) to (d) The Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) is a national programme being implemented in partnership with the States, in which, *inter alia*, one of the goals specifies retention of all children upto the elementary level by 2010. The dropout rate has fallen sharply by 11.3 percentage points at primary level since 2001 upto 2004, compared to a decline of only 2.3 percentage points between the years 1990 to 2000. The dropout rate at the elementary level declined from 53.7% in 2000-01 to 50.84% in 2004-05.

A multi-pronged approach has been adopted under the SSA for reducing dropout rates. These include, *inter alia*, strengthening of schools and improving the quality of education through improvement in school infrastructure, recruitment of additional teachers, provision of annual school grants, regular training of teachers, regular academic support to teachers etc. In addition, interventions under SSA also aim at building community support, flexible schooling for the hardest to reach children, special provisions to promote education of girls, as well as children with special needs. The Mid-day-Meal programme also complements the strategy to reduce dropout rates.

The Central-State funding pattern for the XIth Plan period is in the ratio of 65:35 for the first two years, 60:40 in the third year, 55:45 in the fourth and 50:50 in the final year of the Plan period for all States/UTs except the North Eastern States where it will be in the ratio of 90:10 with the Central Share being resourced from the 10% earmaked funds for the region in SSA's central budget.

Entry of foreign universities

*249. DR. K. MALAISAMY: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the policy of Government in allowing the entry of foreign universities to offer education in India, after entering an agreement with the concerned Indian University;

(b) the areas of education that are to be offered by such univerisites;

(c) whether there would be a mechanism to oversee the activities of the foreign universities; and

(d) whether Government would permit 'fly by night' operators from abroad to come and set up their shops in the name of offering higher education and is aware of its full implications?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) to (d) At present, only the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) has framed regulations, which were last revised in the year 2005, for the entry and operation of foreign universities/institutions for imparting technical education in India. A legislative proposal for regulating the entry and operation of foreign educational institutions, seeking, among other things, prevention of the entry of sub-standard educational institutions, is under consideration of the Government.

Academic Imbalance in some regions

†*250. SHRI UDAY PRATAP SINGH: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to those regions of the country where for want of basic and technical educational institutions, students are being deprived of proper education;

(b) if so, details of the regions where technical institutions are not available till now, State-wise; and

(c) the measures being taken by Government to overcome academic imbalance in those regions?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH): (a) to (c) In order to ensure that students are not deprived of basic education, the Government has put in place the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) for universalisation of Elementary education in the country.

According to the information furnished by the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), the Union Territories (UT) of Andaman and Nicobar, Daman and Diu, Lakshadweep, Dadra & Nagar Haveli and the State of Nagaland, do not have an AICTE approved degree level technical institution. The UT of Lakshadweep does not have an AICTE approved diploma level techical institution. The AICTE which accords approval for the Establishment of new technical institutions does not have any proposals from these UTs/State for setting up of new technical institutions.

In order to mitigate the regional disparities in technical education, the Government has made provisions for reservation of seats in degree and diploma level technical courses for States/UTs lacking such facilities in other States/UTs where such technical education facilities are available. The existing polytechnics in Andaman and Nicobar and Nagaland were supported through a World Bank assisted project called the Third Technician Education Project for capacity expansion, quality enhancement and efficiency improvement. In the XI Plan, it is proposed to have a Central University in each of the 16 States which at present do not have a Central University.

Women trafficking from Assam

*251. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Assam accounts for around 48 per cent of the women trafficked out from the North-Eastern Region;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.